



(For immediate release)

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**DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES ANNOUNCES MISSOURI  
DIVERTED 38 PERCENT OF TRASH FROM LANDFILL DISPOSAL IN 2000**

JEFFERSON CITY, MO, OCT. 2, 2001 -- Missouri is now diverting an estimated 38 percent of its waste from landfills. However, statistics gathered by the Missouri Department of Natural Resources suggest that each Missouri resident disposed of more than a ton of garbage during 2000.

"Tracking the generation of solid waste in Missouri is essential in planning and funding waste diversion and recycling efforts across the state," said Department of Natural Resources Director Stephen Mahfood. "We are now gathering public input to design a statewide plan to reduce waste generation, reuse discarded materials and recycle resources that can be diverted from disposal."

In 2000, Missouri's population was estimated at almost 5.6 million people. Waste generation was estimated to be more than 10 million tons. Thirty-eight percent was diverted from Missouri landfills. Per capita waste generation was estimated at 1.84 tons in 2000.

For comparison, in 1990, the year Missouri began tracking waste generation, the state's population was estimated at 5.1 million people. Waste generation was an estimated 7.5 million tons. It was estimated that 10 percent was being diverted from landfills. Per capita waste generation was estimated at 1.47 tons in 1990.

Over the past two years, the department has been tracking waste generation by using Missouri's annual personal consumption expenditures. Previously, a fixed rate of waste generation was applied. In 1990, Missouri's legislature made a major revision to the state's Solid Waste Management Law, suggesting a goal of 40 percent waste

diversion by the end of 1998. Applying the personal consumption expenditure formula, the diversion rate had reached 39 percent in 1996 and 1997 but fell to 36 percent in each of the next two years.

In recent years, Missouri has seen indications that per capita waste generation is linked to the economy. At present, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency and solid waste planners agree that waste generation increases during periods of economic growth as consumers purchase more goods, resulting in more packaging waste and more worn-out items being thrown away.

"Individuals who separate their trash and who recycle are doing a good job," said Jim Hull, director of the department's Solid Waste efforts, "but major gains in waste diversion can still be made through better handling of food wastes, construction and demolition wastes and industrial and commercial wastes. Currently, waste items such as computers, paints, carpets and pesticides are receiving national attention in efforts to obtain help from manufacturers to effectively dispose of or recycle such products."

For more information on Missouri's waste diversion efforts, contact Dennis Hansen of the department's Solid Waste Management Program at 1-800-361-4827 or (573) 751-5401. Information on recycling and other solid waste management issues can be found on the department's Web site at [www.dnr.state.mo.us/deq/swmp](http://www.dnr.state.mo.us/deq/swmp).

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